

## **Attachment 4.8 (b) (1) – Cooperation with Agencies that are not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities**

### **Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WSDVA)**

DVR and WSDVA have procedures for referring DVR customers with military service to WSDVA to determine whether the individual is eligible for any state or federal Veterans' benefits. If so, WSDVA assists the individual obtain available benefits. This collaboration has increased the use of Veterans' benefits as comparable services in cases where DVR customers experience military-connected disabilities.

### **United States Veterans Administration (USVA)**

DVR is collaborating with the regional USVA to establish a cooperative agreement to facilitate improved service delivery for customers receiving USVA benefits by formalizing referral procedures, designating local referral liaisons, and coordinating services that contribute to the Individualized Plan for Employment.

### **Washington State Department of Social & Health Services**

Washington DVR is housed within the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) which is an umbrella agency for Medicaid services, alcohol and substance abuse recovery, long term care and disability services, children's services, and economic assistance services. DVR continues to work closely with the following DSHS programs.

- Community Services Division (CSD) The CSD administers the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program and the General Assistance – Unemployable (GAU) Program, both of which provide time-limited income assistance and other support services to low-income families and individuals. Washington DVR continues to have an interagency agreement with the CSD that defines mutual roles and practices for serving joint clients.
- Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (DASA) Washington DVR refers individuals who have no other resources for recovery from alcoholism and/or substance abuse to DASA funded treatment programs. DVR maintains active referral relationships with treatment providers at the local level that are funded through DASA contracts with each County in the state.
- Mental Health Division (MHD) The MHD contracts with regional entities for the delivery of community mental health services and directly operates two state psychiatric hospitals. Washington DVR's relationship with mental health partners has significantly improved over the past 18-months due to much closer collaboration between DVR and MHD. The following are examples of this strengthened partnership:
  - DVR and MHD have jointly conducted cross-training between VR Counselors and mental health practitioners at 5 locations across the state to highlight the

key elements of both service delivery systems and support better coordination on the employment needs of MH consumers

- DVR, in collaboration with MHD and the Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation (CCER) at the University of Washington, sponsored a statewide series of training sessions for VR Counselors and mental health employment specialists to enhance their skills in assisting consumers to obtain employment through job placement and related activities.
  - Using Medicaid Infrastructure Grant funding the MHD created and led a “Willing Partners” employment project in which DVR plays a key role. The project provides intensive technical assistance to 3 Regional Support Networks that are committed to improving employment services to MH consumers.
  - MHD has invested federal block grant funding to strengthen mental health clubhouses with an emphasis on improving their capacity to provide employment services and to be stronger DVR contractors.
  - DVR and MHD continue a mutual collaboration to explore ways that mental health agencies can effectively become Employment Networks and build a revenue stream from the Ticket to Work Program that will fund extended services for those mental health consumers who require a supported employment model.
  - DVR and several Mental Health Agencies have collaborated on a Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) project at the Kent DVR office. The WRAP project is a 9 week series of trainings for customers with mental illness facilitated by peer specialists that our Kent office has begun by partnering with different mental health service centers. A special employment focus was developed for this project. This project is intended to bring DVR programming in line with the recovery oriented revolution in mental health services to increase the employment outcomes in a time-limited VR program despite gaps in access to traditional treatment and help customers develop their own long term support. The WRAP project is being expanded to other DVR locations, but the final number has not yet been determined.
  - DVR has assigned liaison VR Counselors that work itinerantly from several Mental Health Agencies across the state. A VR Counselor works from the mental health center at least one day per week, facilitating access to VR services for mental health consumers.
- Division of Developmental Disabilities The DSHS Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) is the primary agency that funds extended services for individuals with developmental disabilities who require supported employment. DDD contracts for these services with Washington counties, and counties sub-contract with community rehabilitation programs to provide the direct services.

DVR has continued working to strengthen and improve its coordination with DDD this year. DVR and DDD leadership meet on a regular basis, and are co-sponsoring several initiatives aimed at improving employment outcomes for transition youth with developmental disabilities and advancing the skills of

community rehabilitation programs that serve joint DVR and DDD customers. DVR has engaged with two large counties (King and Snohomish) in piloting models of coordinated services and funding that will improve services and more efficiently leverage funds.

DVR is represented as a member of the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council.

- Aging & Disability Services Programs (ADSP) Washington DVR coordinates very closely with attendant care services provided through the ADSP for clients who require personal assistance. This includes coordination of attendant care services required by individuals in both school and employment settings.
- Medical Assistance (MA) All individuals served by Washington DVR who receive Medicaid obtain their services through MA. DVR coordinates closely with MA to assure that individuals receive medical services necessary to achieve their employment goal.
- Health Care for Workers with Disabilities (HWD) The HWD is a Medicaid Buy-in Program administered by DSHS. Washington DVR coordinates closely with HWD to assist qualified individuals in continuing to receive medical benefits after they become employed.

### **Tribal Programs**

DVR and the Department of Services for the Blind have a joint memorandum of understanding with Washington's seven Tribal 121 programs that outlines how these parties and their employees work together to ensure effective communication, collaboration, coordination and cooperation in serving individuals with disabilities who are tribal members in Washington State. The agreement, updated in 2008, outlines procedures for referrals, joint cases, financial responsibility, shared training opportunities, information sharing and communication. Tribal 121 Directors meet annually with DVR and DSB Directors in a government-to-government collaboration to promote partnership, to maximize resources, and to ensure high quality services for individuals with disabilities who are tribal members. DVR has begun providing data to its Tribal partners to assist in provision of services and collaboration.

DVR also has plans at the DSHS level that outline its cooperative working relationships and service delivery commitments with all Federally Recognized Washington tribes, including those that do not operate 121 programs. DVR participates as a member on the Indian Policy Advisory Committee.

### **Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH)**

In February 2008, a Statewide Deaf Services Coordinator was appointed to the ODHH Advisory Committee as DVR's representative. The position and this appointment strengthen DVR's partnership with ODHH. ODHH is currently working on a model tool to assist DVR in evaluating the sign language skills of the Rehabilitation Counselors for

the Deaf. ODHH expects it will be completed in 2008-09. ODHH manages the Sign Language Interpreter Contract and values feedback from all sources to improve the quality of interpreter services. ODHH is also the managing agency for DVR's contract for Video Relay System (VRS) and Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) technologies. DVR and ODHH are actively negotiating to upgrade and implement a statewide system which is expected to increase access for all Deaf staff and provide greater accommodations for rural customers.

### **Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment**

The DVR Director participates as a member of the Governor's Committee and partners with the Committee on various efforts. In FY 2008, the Governor's Committee partnered with DVR to co-sponsor an inter-agency work group mandated by the State Workforce Board to identify strategies for improving services and outcomes through the one-stop service delivery system for individuals with disabilities. Recommendations were presented to the Board in November 2007.

DVR also partners with the Governor's Committee on a one-week youth with disabilities leadership camp conducted each year at The Evergreen State College.

### **Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)**

WRAP is a 9 week series of trainings for customers with mental illness facilitated by peer specialists that our Kent office has begun by partnering with different mental health service centers. A special employment focus was developed for this project. This project is intended to bring DVR programming in line with the recovery oriented revolution in mental health services to increase the employment outcomes in a time-limited VR program despite gaps in access to traditional treatment and help customers develop their own long term support.

### **Community Mental Health Centers**

DVR is working to support clients with mental illness by offering services on an itinerant basis from community mental health centers in King County. A VR Counselor works from the mental health center at least one day per week, facilitating access to VR services for mental health consumers.

### **Centers for Independent Living**

DVR currently contracts Title VII, Part B funds to seven independent living centers throughout Washington State. Centers use Part B funds to enhance and expand independent living services to individuals with disabilities. In addition to core services, IL Centers have been focusing on outreach to increase services in unserved or underserved geographic areas. The IL center in Ellensburg (Central WA Disability Resources / CWDR) is currently in the process of exploring a branch office in Yakima to serve potential customers in Yakima and the lower Yakima valley. The IL center in Everett (disAbility Resources Connection / dRC) is also exploring the possibility of opening a branch office in Bellingham to serve IL customers in that area. DVR is also working very closely with The Washington State Independent Council (WASILC). Public forums have been occurring and are scheduled throughout the state. The WASILC is

also exploring the possibility of having two additional centers added to the current seven centers throughout the state. In FFY 2009 DVR is shifting the focus of its Title VII, Part B.funds contracts with Centers for Independent Living to a transition focus.

### **Say Hey**

Say Hey is a networking opportunity to welcome professionals with disabilities in the community as well as employers and other community partners. Each Say Hey is hosted by a group of partners working together to ensure their workplaces and community are able to attract, hire and retain a diverse workforce. The events bring together professionals who are new to the area with a more established "welcoming brigade". Attendees include community leaders, corporate and government representatives, community organizations and individuals willing to help make the honorees feel more connected with their community as well as local employers and potential workers with disabilities. Everyone who supports diversity is welcome to be a part of the welcoming brigade to support a community that embraces diversity and welcomes individuals with disabilities in the workplace and community. Sey Hey originated in Olympia in 2008 and has expanded to Tacoma, Seattle, Spokane, and Kitsap County in 2009.

### **Washington State Business Leadership Network (WSBLN)**

The WSBLN is a network of employers who educate and support businesses to hire, retain, and improve customer service for people with disabilities.

### **Yakima County Special Needs Coalition**

The Yakima County Special Needs Coalition was established to address transportation accessibility issues of citizens with disabilities. People for People, a local non-profit, has provided transportation services in Yakima County since 1982 and leads the coalition to work with community service providers to remove transportation barriers in order to access services, employment opportunities, and daily activities. The goal is, "improving transportation effectiveness and efficiency throughout Yakima County by collaboration." Members include Yakima Transit, Medstar Cabulance, taxi companies, County DD, Yakama Nation, DSHS, DSB, DVR, and private citizens.

Perhaps the most significant project was Yakama Nation Transit. In collaboration with People for People, the Yakama Nation received a \$490,000 federal grant in 2007 to give people living in remote areas of the Yakama Indian Reservation access to health care, education, employment and other essential services. Although currently on a fixed route between Toppenish and White Swan there are plans to expand the coverage area. The bus is open to all riders at no cost.

### **Provider Organizations**

DVR participates in provider organization meetings to share information, hear concerns

and collaborate on issues affecting employment services for individuals referred to providers by the Division. DVR participates regularly in Partnership 2020 and Rehabilitation Enterprises of Washington meetings.

### **Traumatic Brain Injury Workgroup**

In the late 1990s, DVR was the primary sponsor of a demonstration grant to identify gaps in providing services to individuals who sustained a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Recently, DVR has played a role in an implementation grant by having a representative that serves as a member of the TBI Advisory Board. This group discusses TBI-related policy issues, system development, and/or the need for services to meet the needs of TBI survivors, family members, prospective employers and community members. The TBI Advisory Board has identified gaps in housing, a lack of resources and a need for support group facilitator training. This Board has successfully encouraged the Washington State Legislature to pass legislation that adds fees to traffic violations, like negligent driving and speeding because these offenses tend to lead to injury accidents and TBIs. These fees collected are used to help fund TBI-related programs and resources. DVR plans to continue to be an active partner in addressing the needs of individuals in Washington State who have been, or will be impacted by traumatic brain injuries in the future.

### **University of Washington Rehabilitation Program**

In 2006, the University of Washington Rehabilitation Counseling Unit cultivated a collaborative relationship with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) by establishing an on-site Rehabilitation Medicine-DVR Representative. This mutually beneficial relationship improves inpatient and outpatient care at University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) by providing UWMC patients with direct access to DVR services during their hospital treatment. Early introduction in the medical setting provides DVR with comprehensive insight into patient needs and makes the referral process more efficient and seamless. This relationship provides UWMC patients with additional resources for education, support, and funding. The DVR liaison works to coordinate DVR orientation and intake procedures for individuals referred from UW Rehab Medicine; determines eligibility for DVR services; provides information and referral; participates in UWMC team staffing to coordinate DVR services with the interdisciplinary team treatment; upon release from the hospital, assists with transitioning the individual to a VR Counselor near their home; learns about extensive medical and other resources available through the UW Medical School; and shares resources with other DVR counselors.

### **Northwest Workforce Development Council's (NWDC) Regional Access Team**

This group's mission statement is "To develop processes, strategies and products necessary to fully implement the WorkSource Policy Relating to the Provision of Reasonable Accommodation, Reasonable Modification, and Auxiliary Aides and Services to Persons with Disabilities "The NWDC serves Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan Counties which includes WorkSource Centers in Bellingham, Mt. Vernon, and Oak Harbor. Membership on the Regional Access Team includes a DVR Supervisor, WorkSource Liaison VRCs, WorkSource Center Coordinators, ES Staff (including

Veterans representatives), Workforce Development Council staff, and the Disability Specialists from Skagit Valley College, Whatcom Community College, and Bellingham Technical College. Activities of the team have included:

- Coordinating disability-related trainings for the WorkSource partnership
- Conducting accessibility surveys and improving access at each WorkSource Center
- Creating disability friendly brochures and outreach to the disability community
- Addressing reasonable accommodation issues in programs and services
- Implementing and tracking the use of assistive technology
- Developing competencies for disability specialists
- Serving as the disability resource for the partnership.

**Other**

DVR has not entered into agreements with programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. DVR has not entered into agreements related to state use contracts.